

TOO LATE.

Sunbeams shot with gold dark clouds
Beauty shed o'er storm-swept sky,
To learn that when their task was done
Day was o'er and they must die.

Sweet buds opened, braved the blast,
Ventured into perfect flower,
To see their time of blooming past,
Springtime o'er and gone their hour.

Many hearts with efforts brave
Struggle, fight and conquer fate,
To find life over as the cost
Of victory won at last—too late.
—E. S. O'C., in the Home Magazine.

THE DERVISH AND
THE BOWL OF PEAS.

AN ARMENIAN FOLK-TALE.

BY FANNY D. BERGEN.

Once there was a husband and wife who had no children. The man kept a shop in the city where they lived. The wife was very fond of children and often felt very lonely in her home while her husband was away at his work. She often used to go out and sit on the doorstep as the children passed, going to and from school. Then she would sigh and look longingly at the little boys and girls who were going by her door and wish that she had children of her own.

One afternoon as she sat thus, a Dervish who was passing along the street, stopped to speak with her. He asked her why she sighed and looked so longingly after the school children.

She replied: "I have no children of my own and I love to watch these children and hear them talk. I sigh, wishing that I had children of my own."

The Dervish reached into the bag which hung from his girdle and took out some dried peas. He filled a small bowl with these peas and gave them to the woman, saying: "Put these peas under your pillow to-night when you go to sleep and when you awaken your house will no longer be childless."

The Dervishes are supposed to know many things and to be able to accomplish many wonders, so the woman did as she had been commanded. That night she went to sleep with the peas placed safely under her pillow.

Sometime after midnight she was awakened and found her bed full of small children who were running and crawling about, clamoring for food. She rose very early in the morning and kneaded a great pan of bread to bake, to feed the many little children that thronged about her, but these little people were so hungry that they would not wait until the bread was baked, but continually seized portions of the dough and ate it. This vexed the woman very much for she saw there would be no dough left to bake into loaves. At length she stopped kneading, and taking a large stick in her hand, in her anger she beat the children so hard that she suddenly found she had killed them. Then she began to weep and said: "Alas! alas! What have I done? I have killed all my little children. Now there is no one to take their father's dinner to him in his shop."

Then the woman heard a small voice calling from one corner of the kitchen where stood a pair of her shoes. Going to look she found that one baby had hidden himself in one of her shoes and was safely concealed there. He called out: "You have not killed me. I am still alive. I will carry my father's dinner to him."

The mother was pleased, and after lifting the little fellow out of her shoe gave him food, then bade him sit down and wait until she had baked bread and prepared his father's dinner. When the dinner was prepared and packed in some small saddle-bags she went out and led the donkey, for they owned one, to the door. After the saddle-bags were put on the donkey's back she said: "But where will you sit, my child? You are too small to ride on the donkey." The little boy said, "I can ride in his ear. Put me there, and you will see that I will be quite safe."

So the mother put the little fellow in one of the donkey's ears.

The donkey knew the way to the shop, for he had often gone with the dinner before. As he was going along the street the queer little fellow sitting in one ear began to sing to himself. The people along the street stopped to listen, and some ran toward the donkey to see what it could mean, for they could hear someone singing in a clear voice and yet no person was to be seen. At length the donkey turned into the right shop, the man took out his dinner, lifted his little son from the donkey's ear and began to eat. After a while he said, "My little son, can you go to the spring under a large apple tree that grows out in yonder field and bring me some fresh water?" The little fellow took the red earthen water vessel in his hand and started to fetch the water. When he got to the spring he saw that the tree overshadowing it was full of beautiful red apples, so he placed the vessel on the ground and climbed up into the tree to gather some of the fruit. The apples were very good and as he sat on a branch eating some and gathering others to carry away, a great giant came stalking along. There are many of these giants who live outside the cities in caves in the mountain sides. They are very large of stature, have seven eyes, and talk in a loud, roaring voice.

Now the apple tree which the little son of the shop-keeper had climbed belonged to this particular giant. "Why are you stealing my fruit? Come down this minute!" But the little boy was frightened and kept quiet, away up in the tree. The giant, however, insisted that he must come down, and at last said: "Well, if you will not come down, you must at least hand me some of the apples which belong to me. Bring me some apples and put them in my hand, and you may remain in the tree." The giant spoke more kindly, so the little boy being less frightened did as he was told, but as he reached some apples out to the giant the latter quickly seized him in one great hand and shut him up in the game-bag which hung from his girdle.

The little fellow did not like being stuffed down among the various kinds of birds and other small animals which the giant had taken while out hunting, but he could not help himself and so had to lie still until the giant opened the bag

when he reached his own home. Then the giant lifted the little boy out of the bag and handed him to his wife, saying, "There, keep this boy safe until evening, when you may serve him up for my supper."

The giant's wife carried the little boy out into the yard and there turned over him a large basket, but although so young, the little boy was very cunning, and he soon lifted the basket on one side, and crawling out, quickly made his escape.

When the giant returned and called for his supper, he was very angry on finding that the little boy had run away. He immediately walked off over the fields to the great apple tree, for he felt pretty sure he would find the little boy there.

Sure enough, there he was high up in the branches, eating a big red apple. The giant asked him to come down and hand him some more apples, and he said, "This time I will not touch you." At first the little boy was frightened, but finally he trusted to the good promises of the giant and climbed down towards him. As soon as he came within reach of the latter he was caught with no gentle hand and again carried back in the bag.

The giant now bade his wife very sternly to be sure that the little fellow should not escape, and said to her, "Tomorrow night you may serve him up for my supper."

The woman locked the little boy up in an empty room, where she felt sure he would be safe. He looked about for a long time, seeking some way by which to free himself. At last he saw a very small window up in the ceiling of the room. The walls of the room were very high, and he felt that if he could get to this window perhaps the giant could not reach him.

Next day the giant looked into the room to see that all was secure, and at first he could not see the little boy, but presently he spied him sitting on the ledge of the small window away up near the ceiling.

"How did you get there?" said the giant.

"I put one chair on top of another," said the little boy.

The giant tried this plan, but he was very clumsy, and when he attempted to step on the chairs they slipped and he fell to the floor. Then in a very stern voice he ordered the little boy to tell him how he reached that high window.

The little boy said, "I climbed here by piling eggs one on top of another, then I climbed up the stack of eggs."

The giant tried this plan, but of course the eggs would not stay one on top of another, but rolled off over the floor. He was very angry by this time and said, "You must tell me, or I will surely kill you when I reach you."

Then the little boy said, "You see that large hook in the side of the wall? I stood on a chair and hung myself by my coat to that hook. Then I kicked away the chair, and that made it possible for me to jump from the hook to this window."

Then the giant followed this plan, and of course when he kicked away the chair, according to the directions of the little boy, he was hung by the hook and choked to death.

By and by his wife came in and found him dead. Then she cried, for she loved the cruel giant who was her husband. Meantime, the little boy climbed down and fled away to his father's shop. He had been gone almost two days, and his father was much troubled. He said, "Why, where have you been, my little son? Where is the fresh water I sent you to bring me?"

The little boy narrated all that had happened to him. His father told him that he had done very well for so small a boy, but that he had better not meddle again with other people's property or try any more strange adventures. Then he took him home to his mother, who had been weeping these two days. She rejoiced over having him back safe and well, and they all lived happy forever after. —Ladies' World.

A Story Fifty Years Long.

The death of Uncle Jack Martin, of Effingham, at the age of 90, removes a remarkable character. In the very early days Uncle Jack was a freighter across the plains, and he had many thrilling encounters with the redskins. It is said that the old man had one story that was so extended in its details that no one had ever heard it from start to finish. For something like 50 years it was his favorite story, and he could be easily started on it by the guests at the hotel of which he was the proprietor. People would listen for awhile and then go away, the crowd being kept constant by new arrivals, but no one ever stayed to hear the finish. Indeed, it is current in Effingham that the story never was finished, and that as it went along it grew wider and more amplified until it took in thousands of miles of territory and hundreds of personages with such bewildering complexity of circumstances that a climax would be impossible. —Kansas City Journal.

Science Versus Romance.

How the shades of the old poets and fable-writers would tremble with amazement and indignation if they could come back to the upper world and stand once more in classic Greece! Right in the center of the famous land of Boeotia a company of enterprising Englishmen have laid desecrating hands upon a body of water once sacred to the gods and the heroes, and, having drained it, they are now using its fertile bed as a great truck farm. Melons, colza, beets and other vegetables are cultivated where naiads used to disport themselves, and the cry of the teamster, as he carries the "truck" to market, is heard close by the spot where once stood a famous oracle of Apollo. The body of water is Lake Copais, the largest in Greece, which has thus fallen a victim to the base uses of modern trade.

Spread of the English Language.

It is not generally known, perhaps, that English is fast becoming the polite language of Europe; indeed, it seems likely, from the way in which its use has increased within the past generation, that it will become the universal language. According to Mulhall, it was spoken in 1801 by twelve per cent. of the population of Europe, and in 1891 by twenty-seven per cent., thus more than doubling its percentage during the ninety years. Within the same period every other language suffered a loss. Strange to say, the Japanese have made English the language of their Foreign Office. All their intercourse with foreign diplomats, and their telegraphic correspondence with their representatives abroad, is conducted in English. The Japanese have well been called the "Yankees of the Far East."

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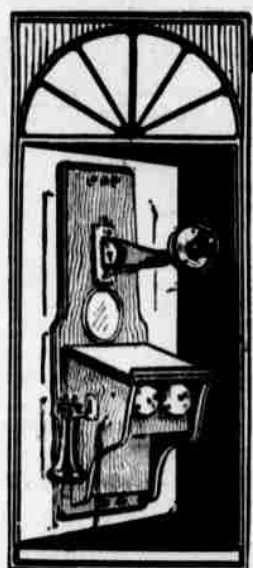
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